

Grade 10 Civics

Social Action "Thinking Globally, Acting Locally"

Critical Question

What is the most effective plan of action to help bring about meaningful social change?

Overview

In this challenge, students will design and select a powerful plan for social action by examining a number of examples of how individuals and groups have taken social action then designing their own action plan to be share with the class. Using the examples presented in class and their prior knowledge the students will build criteria for an effective action plan. Then, they will work in groups to research a global issue of social justice and come up with their own proposal for an effective action plan. Finally, they will present their proposal to the class. The class will decide on the most effective plan, based on the criteria they had developed earlier.

Type of Challenge

- A) Design to Specs
- B) Judge Better/Best

Requisite tools

Criteria for judgment

Criteria for an effective plan of action:

- will contribute to bringing about meaningful change
- feasible
- supports protection/extension of human rights
- appeals to others to join

Background Knowledge

- knowledge of the challenges presented by their assigned topic
- knowledge of the methods used by various NGOs to tackle these challenges

Possible Topics:

Homelessness

HIV/AIDS in Africa

Injustice

Child Labour

War

Fair Trade

Critical thinking vocabulary

- Criteria
- Judgment
- Justify

Habits of mind

- **Respectful:** Is willing to engage respectfully in discussion with others.
- **Constructive:** Is willing to take and give constructive feedback.
- **Inclusive:** Seeks to include all participants.
- **Accommodating:** Is willing to compromise and to adjust thinking and behaviour to the situation.

Suggested Activities

Connect to students' previous knowledge

- Invite students to consider ways that people can make the world a better place. This activity might be done through a Graffiti strategy. Place several pieces of chart paper around the room with the following titles: "As an individual"; "As a class"; "As a school"; "As a community"; "As a nation". Divide students among pieces of chart paper and ask them brainstorm all the ways they can think of taking action. After a short period of time (1-2 minutes), ask students to rotate to the next piece of chart paper and repeat the process.
- Once students have returned to the original chart paper, ask them to choose as a group the 3 most effective actions that could be taken.
- Debrief the activity by asking groups to share what criteria they used to determine the 3 most effective courses of action.
- Set aside the pieces of chart paper to be used in a later activity.

Share objectives with students

- Explain that students will be building criteria for an effective plan of action to help bring about meaningful social change on a particular issue. Then, they will be creating a plan of action and the class will select the most effective plan of action based on the criteria we have come up with as a class.

Build criteria for an effective action plan by examining a variety of model action plans

- Invite students to think about a single person, a group or an organization that has taken action on a global issue of concern. Ask them to share their ideas with a partner and then randomly select partners to share their ideas with the class.

- Explain that before students research and come up with an action plan on their assigned issue, the class will examine some examples of people who have developed and carried out action plans. Provide students with readings or short documentary clips that highlight the actions of specific individuals and organizations that have taken social action (e.g. Craig Kielberger, Doctors Without Borders, etc).
- As students read or view materials, invite them to consider and record the following information: What action was taken? What were the results?/Did it make a difference? What made this plan of action effective? You may wish to create a graphic organizer for students to record this information.
- Once students have reviewed the materials provided and recorded their ideas, invite them to share their ideas. Use this as an opportunity to draw out the criteria for an effective plan of action (will contribute to bringing about meaningful change; feasible; supports protection/extension of human rights; appeals to others to join).
- Re-distribute the chart paper generated by the graffiti activity earlier and ask students to assess the ideas recorded on the chart paper by the criteria that you have developed as a class.

Introduce the Critical Challenge

- Explain to students that their challenge is to work in groups to research an issue and to develop an effective action plan that would help bring about meaningful social change on their issue. They will ultimately “pitch” their action plan to the class and the class will decide which proposal to follow up on.

Gathering information

- Assign each group an issue.
- Ask groups to first develop a list of questions that they have about that issue. Consider providing guidance on how to develop powerful questions to guide their research.
- Provide time and/or resources to research the issue and a method by which they will gather research notes.

Developing an effective action plan

- Guide students to prioritize the challenges faced by those dealing with their issue before trying to think of an action plan. They might do this by first listing all the challenges they have discovered through their research. Then, they might rank order those challenges based on which are most pressing. Finally, they might

apply the criteria for an effective action plan to each challenge to decide which one seems to lend itself to effective action on the local level.

- Once students have chosen one challenge to attempt to address with their action plan, ask them to choose a goal (e.g. fundraising, raising awareness, influencing government(s) to take action, influencing corporations to change behaviour, etc.)
- Challenge students to develop an effective action plan that meets the criteria identified by the class. You may wish to provide them with a template to frame their planning.
- You may wish to consider assigning roles to various group members. See below for one idea about how to assign roles

Making a proposal to the class

- Invite each group to “pitch” their proposal for an action plan to the class. Provide parameters for their pitch (e.g. must include background information about the issue, highlight the importance of the issue, use criteria to frame their justification for their action plan, etc.)
- Ask the class to decide (e.g. by voting or consensus building) on the most effective plan of action.
- Consider having the class carry out the plan of action.

Roles for each group member:

Team Leader (How am I supporting my team members? Is everyone pulling their weight? Do I have any questions for the teacher?)

- delegate
- organise
- accountable to teacher for progress
- leads by example
- motivates group
- supports all members (gopher)
- problem solver
- asks teacher questions and reports to group
- reports on group activity through an Activity Log

Artistic Director (What medium will i use to communicate our proposal?)

- uses media effectively to capture message
- constructs a catchy and provocative message
- makes audience think
- captures audience attention
- focus is on the "medium of the message"

Communication Consultant (Is the content clear, concise, relevant to the audience?)

- writes copy (content of message)
- message is clear and concise
- works closely with Artistic Director
- makes calls to community organizations if necessary

Researcher (What is the focus of our research?)

- finds focused, relevant information
- collects info that answers the following:
- Who, What, Where, When, Why, How
- Why should we care?
- What can we do?
- What are the issues?

Grade 1-2 Math

Packaging for a Present

Critical Question:

Would Santa's new toy be best packaged in a cylinder, hexagonal prism, or cube?

Students will investigate the attributes of several geometric shapes and make a recommendation as to which shape is the best for the toy's package. Recommendations will be based on two criteria and supported with proof from their investigations. Student recommendations will be presented in report form.

Overview:

In this challenge students investigate the attributes of two-dimensional shapes and three-dimensional figures and communicate their findings through a report by helping Santa decide how to best design packaging for a new toy. Students investigate and develop insights about the characteristics of two-dimensional shapes and three dimensional figures and the interrelationships of shapes by visualizing and comparing shapes and figures in various positions (The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 1-8, Mathematics, p. 9). They will also use reasoning to arrive at a plausible answer using evidence they find in their explorations and investigations and will communicate the results in report format. (The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 1-8, Language, p. 42-43)

Objectives:

Broad understanding:

- Different shapes have different attributes. Some shapes are better suited for specific purposes. Some shapes will fill a container more efficiently than others.

Overall Expectations Assessed:

- Identify common two-dimensional shapes and three-dimensional figures and sort and classify them by their attributes.
- Gather and organize ideas and information to write for an intended purpose and audience.

Specific Expectations Addressed:

- Identify and describe common three-dimensional figures and sort and classify them by their attributes.
- Describe similarities and differences between an everyday object and a three-dimensional figure
- Identify and describe shapes within other shapes
- Describe the relative locations of objects or people using positional language
- Gather information to support ideas for writing in a variety of ways and/or from a

- variety of sources
- Write short texts using a few simple forms
- Make simple revisions to improve the content, clarity, and interest of their written work using a few simple strategies
- Begin to establish a personal voice in their writing by using pictures and words that convey their attitude or feeling towards the subject or audience

Requisite Tools:

Background knowledge:

- Knowledge of two-dimensional shapes and three-dimensional figures.
- Knowledge of how to record simple observations in a journal format.

Criteria for judgment:

- stacks well in a truck
- protects the toy during shipping (doesn't leave big gaps, doesn't move around a lot)

Critical Thinking Vocabulary:

- argument
- criteria
- evidence

Thinking Strategies:

Graphic organizers

- KWC chart

Anchor charts

- Journal
- Report format

Habits of Mind:

- Critically minded
- Persistence/perseverant
- Respectful
- Constructive

Suggested Activities

Pre-planning

- Print Mrs. Moher's letter on chart paper and put it in an envelope addressed to

the class (ideally send this letter to the school through Canada Post).

- Arrange for a guest speaker to come to the classroom to speak to students (e.g., Fed Ex, UPS, Scholastic, Board Courier) about the shapes of packages that they usually transport and how they stack the packages in the vehicle to offer the most protection to the packages.
- Gather mini-chalk boards, clip boards or white boards for students to use to record information from the visitor interview.
- Find three different balls to use for the ball experiment (Hacky Sack ball, basket ball, small rubber bouncy ball).
- Gather a variety of three-dimensional solids (several of each solid).
- Gather a number of cylinders, cubes and hexagonal prisms (all cylinders the same size, all cubes the same size, all hexagonal prisms the same size).
- Find nets for a cylinder, cube and hexagonal prism (similar in size). Copy two of each of these nets onto overhead transparencies. Cut, fold and tape one net of each solid to create a cylinder, cube and hexagonal prism (leave the top open). Cut and fold the other nets and keep as a visual reference.
- Find a spiral toy (“Slinky” or other small thin toy) that will fit into each of the solids.
- Bring in a shoe box or other small box for students to use to stack the solids in. Bring a toy truck or wagon that can be used to transport the solids from one point to another.
- Create a Blackline Master with pictures of the various solids so students can use these to record their sorting and their ranking of the solids.

Introduce the Scenario/Present the Critical Challenge KWC Chart

- Have the Secretary or Principal deliver Mrs. Moher’s letter to the class. Open the letter and read it aloud to the class. The letter asks the students to investigate three-dimensional shapes to determine which shape would be the most appropriate to use as a package for a new toy.
- As a shared reading exercise the teacher and the students create a KWC chart - What I Know, What I’m Trying to Find Out, Any Special Considerations (Hyde, 2006). To do this the teacher and students read the letter and deconstruct it to determine what they are being asked to do. Information is underlined in the letter and recorded in the appropriate column on the chart.
- Create a plan of action for what needs to be learned/done (for example, we need to know what these shapes look like, we need to see which one stacks the best, we need to know how to write a report, etc.)

Creating Powerful Questions

- Explain to student that the class will have a visitor who will answer our

questions about packaging.

- Use the 'Powerful Questions' critical challenge from *Critical Challenges Across the Curriculum* by Roland Case and LeRoi Daniels to design appropriate questions for our visitor.

Gathering Information

- Welcome the visitor into the classroom. Have students ask the questions that the group created. Video tape (or audio tape) the interview so the responses can be viewed/listened to again by the group.
- As students are listening they can draw or write any key pieces of information they learn from the visitor on their clipboards or white boards.
- After the visit students complete a journal entry, "What I learned about shipping packages from our visitor...". This information will be helpful when students are writing their reports.

Modeling the use of criteria

- Explain to students that in order to make a decision we will have to think about our options using the criteria outlined in the letter. Explain that to prepare to do that, the class will practice thinking about criteria with a different activity.
- As a group conduct an experiment on selecting a ball for the school yard in order to model the collection of data and note-taking that students will do for the toy.
- Use the criteria 'bounces well' and 'easy to throw and catch'. For each ball, create a chart with three columns. Title the columns: Ball Name, I See and I think.
- For each ball have a couple of students try out the ball (bounce it, throw and catch it). Record their observations in the 'I See' column. In the 'I think' column, record inferences about the ball using the criteria and student inferences (e.g., the Hacky Sack ball does not bounce, only one or two students would be able to play with the ball at a time, it would be hard for a grade one to do, etc.). Repeat this process for each of the balls.

Modeling the decision making process

- Using a shared writing approach, model writing a report for the class choice for 'best ball for the school yard'. On chart paper create a report form like Blackline Master #4 'Report Form for Santa's Toy'. Refer to the 'I See', 'I Think' charts created for the different types of balls.
- Invite student to use the information collected in those experiments to help to decide which would be the best ball to purchase for the yard.
- Work with students to complete the ranking section and the sections titled, 'I would recommend...' and 'I would not recommend...'.

Assessing the options

Blackline Master #1, 2 and 3 (Observation Recording Sheet Station 1, 2 and 3)

- Explain to students that they will visit 3 different stations. At each station, students will be working with the solids to learn about their attributes and to help them determine what solid they would recommend to Santa as the package for his new toy.
- Explain to students that they will work with one type of solid at a time when conducting these experiments (for example, work with the cylinders and see how they stack, then work with the cubes and see how they stack, and so on)
- Divide students into groups of three to rotate through stations. As they work with the shapes, invite them to record their observations in the 'I See' column and their inferences in the "I Think" column.

Explanation of the stations:

Station # 1 Students place shapes in a small box to investigate how well the shapes stack and fit together (amount of space between shapes and the stability of the shapes when stacked). The box represents the truck that will be used to transport the toys to Santa's workshop.

Station # 2 Students load the shapes into the back of the truck and they investigate what happens to the shapes when the truck moves, turns or 'hits a bump in the road'.

Station # 3 Students explore the attributes of the solids and sort them in a variety of ways (stack, roll, stability, number and shape of faces). Note: This station may not be necessary at this time if there are sufficient solids for students to use if the class is divided in two groups.

Making a judgment

Blackline Master #4 'Report Form for Santa's Toy'

- Invite students to evaluate each of the solids using the two criteria on the sheet.
- Ask them to glue cut-out pictures of the solids onto their sheets to rank them in order from the solid that provides the most protection to the toy to the solid that provides the least protection to the toy.
- Next they complete the sections "I would recommend..." and 'I would not recommend...' using information from the class visit and their notes from the experiments.

Miss Morrison's Class
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April 21, 2008

Dear Friends,

How are you? I am really enjoying my new job but I miss working with you and Miss Morrison so much!

I am writing because I need your help. I was working with some of my Math friends in Toronto on the weekend. We were talking about the best package to use to send a new toy Santa's Elves have made to Santa's storage shed. The packages will be sent to the shed in a truck. We looked at a cylinder package, a hexagonal prism package and a cube package but we could not agree which one was the best to use! I told my Math friends that you would be able to help us because you are such great thinkers.

Could you work with the shapes and see which one would be the best shape for the package? Here is the criteria you need to use when you decide:

- **stacks well in a truck**
- **protects the toy during shipping (doesn't leave big gaps, doesn't move around a lot)**

I need you to send me your recommendations in an official report that I can share with my Math friends.

Thank you in advance for your expert help!

Your Friend,

Mrs. Moher

KWC Chart

What do you know for sure?	What are you trying to find out?	Are there any special considerations? (Special rules? Tricks to watch out for? Things to remember?)
I know that <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	I'm trying to <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	I need to <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>

Source: Comprehending Math by Arthur Hyde, 2006.

Station 1- How well do the solids stack?

Shape	I See.....	I think....
(Insert graphic of cylinder)		
(Insert graphic of hexagonal prism)		
(Insert graphic of cube)		

My Observations

Name: _____

Station 2 - How well does the solid protect the shape?

Shape	I See.....	I think....
(Insert graphic of cylinder)		
(Insert graphic of hexagonal prism)		
(Insert graphic of cube)		

Station 3

Work with the three dimensional solids. Find different ways to sort the solids. Ways you might try sorting:

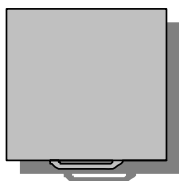
- the number of faces
- the shape of the faces
- do they roll?
- do they stack?
- do they tip?

Santa's Toy Report Form

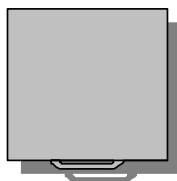
Name: _____

Shapes	Criteria
Cylinder	<input type="checkbox"/> stacks well <input type="checkbox"/> protects the toy during shipping
Hexagonal Prism	<input type="checkbox"/> stacks well <input type="checkbox"/> protects the toy during shipping
Cube	<input type="checkbox"/> stacks well <input type="checkbox"/> protects the toy during shipping

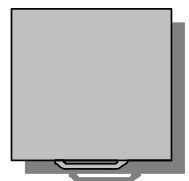
Glue the package shape pictures below. Number 1 protects the toy the most. Number 3 protects the toy the least.



1



2



3

I would recommend (circle one)

Cylinder

Hexagonal Prism

Cube

because...

I would NOT recommend (circle one)

Cylinder

Hexagonal Prism

Cube

because...

Grade 10 Science
Strand: Weather

Having an impact on climate change

Critical Challenge:

The Ontario government wishes to reduce our carbon footprint. The Ministry of the Environment has come up with 20 ways that the average Ontario citizen can reduce their impact. They have asked students to identify the 3 most significant changes the average person can make so that they can focus their environmental campaign on these three changes.

Type of Challenge:

Judge Better/Best

Requisite tools

Background knowledge

- understanding of the factors that have an impact on climate change

Criteria for judgment

Criteria for an effective action to reduce climate change:

- cost effective
- contributes to significant reduction in our impact on climate change
- minimizes impact on life style

Critical thinking vocabulary

- **Argument:** To give reasons for or against a proposal or an idea. The use of logic and evidence to support or refute a point.
- **Criteria:** A set of standards, rules or tests by which something can be measured or judged.

Thinking strategies

- rating scale

Habits of mind

- **Independent-minded:** Resists the pressures to adopt and espouse opinions merely because they are popular.
- **Respectful:** Is willing to engage respectfully in discussion with others.
- **Open-minded:** Is open to views other than one's own, especially to contrary positions.

Suggested Activities

Connecting to students prior beliefs and to the discipline of science

- Invite students to consider the issue of climate change. Remind students that many different people study and talk about the environment and climate change – geographers, politicians, environmental activists, corporations, scientists, etc. Ask students to think to themselves about what the role of the scientist is, particularly in relation to the issue of the environment and climate change.
- Consider structuring their thinking by providing students with 4 seemingly unrelated images and ask them to consider which one best represents, in their view, the role of scientists when it comes to climate change. Is the job of the scientist to be like a bridge? Like a lighthouse? Like a courtroom? Or like a ...? Post each image on a different wall of the classroom.
- When students have had a minute to think to themselves, ask them to move to the wall that best represents their opinion. Once there, invite students to pair up with another student under the same sign and briefly share their opinion and the reasons for it. Consider randomly asking pairs to share their discussion with the class

Introduce the critical challenge

- Present the following scenario to students: The Ontario government wishes to reduce our impact on global climate change. The Ministry of the Environment has come up with 20 ways that the average Ontario citizen can reduce their impact. They have asked students to identify the 3 most significant changes the average person can make so that they can focus their environmental campaign on these three changes.

Building criteria

- Ask students to consider purpose and audience. Discuss with them why the government would ask a consulting firm to do this (e.g. to guide their decision making, to focus a public awareness campaign, etc.). Also ask them to consider the audience (i.e. not only the government but also the individual Ontario citizen who will be asked to make the changes we suggest). Given this purpose and audience, invite students to brainstorm what criteria should their proposal of the 3 most effective actions meet?
- It may be helpful to support students in their thinking about criteria to provide some extreme example. For example, ask them to discuss the following suggestions for individual actions:
 - Getting rid of all the cars in your family
 - Installing solar panels and switching your energy consumption entirely to solar energy
 - Growing all your own food
- Introduce or draw out the following criteria from the discussion:

Criteria for an effective action to reduce climate change:

 - cost effective
 - contributes to significant reduction in our impact on climate

- change
 - minimizes impact on life style
- Explain to students that although they will examine many ways to combat climate change, their final recommendations need to consider the criteria above.

Structuring research

- Organize students into groups. Each group will be a different consulting firm. Consider how to structure the group work to encourage engagement and accountability. Different ways to structure the group's task might be:
 - Give each group 4 different ideas (individual actions to combat climate change) and ask each group member to focus their research on one of those ideas.
 - If there are a total of 20 or 25 ideas to combat climate change, assign each student a different one and have them report on it in a concise way (e.g. a post card or mini-poster); the groups then work collaboratively to assess all 20 ways and choose their top 3 based on the criteria
 - Use a jigsaw strategy where students are assigned different ideas in the home group, then move into expert groups to research their assigned idea and then reconvene in their home group to share their research
- Provide students with information sources or invite them to gather research on their assigned idea. Some useful sources of information on climate change from a scientific perspective include:

Environment Canada: The Science of Climate Change
<http://www.ec.gc.ca/climate/overview-e.html>

Environment Canada: Take Action
<http://www.ec.gc.ca/education/default.asp?lang=En&n=E413CCE7-0>

Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
<http://www.ipcc.ch/>

Making a judgment

- Once students have gathered research on their idea and shared their research with their group, invite them to individually choose their top 5 ideas based on the criteria above and rate them in a chart like the one below.
- Consider using a round-robin or similar strategy through which group members can share their top choices with each other and justify their selections in light of the criteria. Invite groups to collaboratively choose their top 3 choices and prepare a proposal to present to the Ministry of the Environment.

My Top 5 Choices of Effective Individual Actions to Combat Climate Change

	Criteria: cost effective	Criteria: contributes to significant reduction in our impact on climate change	Criteria: minimizes impact on life style
Idea for Effective Action #1:	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center;"> 5 1 </div> <div style="text-align: center; margin: 5px 0;"> </div> <div>Explanation:</div>	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center;"> 5 1 </div> <div style="text-align: center; margin: 5px 0;"> </div> <div>Explanation:</div>	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center;"> 5 1 </div> <div style="text-align: center; margin: 5px 0;"> </div> <div>Explanation:</div>
Idea for Effective Action #2:	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center;"> 5 1 </div> <div style="text-align: center; margin: 5px 0;"> </div> <div>Explanation:</div>	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center;"> 5 1 </div> <div style="text-align: center; margin: 5px 0;"> </div> <div>Explanation:</div>	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center;"> 5 1 </div> <div style="text-align: center; margin: 5px 0;"> </div> <div>Explanation:</div>
Idea for Effective Action #3:	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center;"> 5 1 </div> <div style="text-align: center; margin: 5px 0;"> </div> <div>Explanation:</div>	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center;"> 5 1 </div> <div style="text-align: center; margin: 5px 0;"> </div> <div>Explanation:</div>	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center;"> 5 1 </div> <div style="text-align: center; margin: 5px 0;"> </div> <div>Explanation:</div>
Idea for Effective Action #4:	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center;"> 5 1 </div> <div style="text-align: center; margin: 5px 0;"> </div> <div>Explanation:</div>	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center;"> 5 1 </div> <div style="text-align: center; margin: 5px 0;"> </div> <div>Explanation:</div>	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center;"> 5 1 </div> <div style="text-align: center; margin: 5px 0;"> </div> <div>Explanation:</div>
Idea for Effective Action #5:	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center;"> 5 1 </div> <div style="text-align: center; margin: 5px 0;"> </div> <div>Explanation:</div>	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center;"> 5 1 </div> <div style="text-align: center; margin: 5px 0;"> </div> <div>Explanation:</div>	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center;"> 5 1 </div> <div style="text-align: center; margin: 5px 0;"> </div> <div>Explanation:</div>

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- introduce habits of mind re: suspending judgment? tolerance for ambiguity? etc.
 - introduce thinking tool – fill in criteria – use a rating scale?
 - gather information – divide up btwn group (e.g. 5 ideas per person) – report back to group – group uses thinking tool/rating scale to decide on their top 5?
- OR

Grade 10 Civics

Social Action "Thinking Globally, Acting Locally"

Critical Question

What is the most effective plan of action to help bring about meaningful social change?

Overview

In this challenge, students will develop criteria for an effective action plan by considering a variety of examples of how individuals and groups have taken social action. They will use these examples, and their previous knowledge, to build criteria for an effective action plan. Then, they will work in groups to research a global issue of social justice and come up with their own proposal for an effective action plan. Finally, they will present their proposal to the class. The class will decide on the most effective plan, based on the criteria they had developed earlier.

Type of Challenge

- A) Design to Specs
- B) Judge Better/Best

Requisite tools

Criteria for judgment

Criteria for an effective plan of action:

- will contribute to bringing about meaningful change
- feasible
- supports protection/extension of human rights
- appeals to others to join

Background Knowledge

- knowledge of the challenges presented by their assigned topic
- knowledge of the methods used by various NGOs to tackle these challenges

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Injustice

Child Labour

War

Fair Trade

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Suggested Activities

Connect to students' previous knowledge

- Invite students to consider ways that people can make the world a better place. This activity might be done through a Graffiti strategy. Place several pieces of chart paper around the room with the following titles: "As an individual"; "As a class"; "As a school"; "As a community"; "As a nation". Divide students among pieces of chart paper and ask them brainstorm all the ways they can think of taking action. After a short period of time (1-2 minutes), ask students to rotate to the next piece of chart paper and repeat the process.
- Once students have returned to the original chart paper, ask them to choose as a group the 3 most effective actions that could be taken.
- Debrief the activity by asking groups to share what criteria they used to determine the 3 most effective courses of action.
- Set aside the pieces of chart paper to be used in a later activity.

Share objectives with students

- Explain that students will be building criteria for an effective plan of action to help bring about meaningful social change on a particular issue. Then, they will be creating a plan of action and the class will select the most effective plan of action based on the criteria we have come up with as a class.

Build criteria for an effective action plan by examining a variety of model action plans

- Invite students to think about a single person, a group or an organization that has taken action on a global issue of concern. Ask them to share their ideas with a partner and then randomly select partners to share their ideas with the class.

- Explain that before students research and come up with an action plan on their assigned issue, the class will examine some examples of people who have developed and carried out action plans. Provide students with readings or short documentary clips that highlight the actions of specific individuals and organizations that have taken social action (e.g. Craig Kielberger, Doctors Without Borders, etc).
- As students read or view materials, invite them to consider and record the following information: What action was taken? What were the results?/Did it make a difference? What made this plan of action effective? You may wish to create a graphic organizer for students to record this information.
- Once students have reviewed the materials provided and recorded their ideas, invite them to share their ideas. Use this as an opportunity to draw out the criteria for an effective plan of action (will contribute to bringing about meaningful change; feasible; supports protection/extension of human rights; appeals to others to join).
- Re-distribute the chart paper generated by the graffiti activity earlier and ask students to assess the ideas recorded on the chart paper by the criteria that you have developed as a class.

Introduce the Critical Challenge

- Explain to students that their challenge is to work in groups to research an issue and to develop an effective action plan that would help bring about meaningful social change on their issue. They will ultimately “pitch” their action plan to the class and the class will decide which proposal to follow up on.

Gathering information

- Assign each group an issue.
- Ask groups to first develop a list of questions that they have about that issue. Consider providing guidance on how to develop powerful questions to guide their research.
- Provide time and/or resources to research the issue and a method by which they will gather research notes.

Developing an effective action plan

- Guide students to prioritize the challenges faced by those dealing with their issue before trying to think of an action plan. They might do this by first listing all the challenges they have discovered through their research. Then, they might rank order those challenges based on which are most pressing. Finally, they might

apply the criteria for an effective action plan to each challenge to decide which one seems to lend itself to effective action on the local level.

- Once students have chosen one challenge to attempt to address with their action plan, ask them to choose a goal (e.g. fundraising, raising awareness, influencing government(s) to take action, influencing corporations to change behaviour, etc.)
- Challenge students to develop an effective action plan that meets the criteria identified by the class. You may wish to provide them with a template to frame their planning.
- You may wish to consider assigning roles to various group members. See below for one idea about how to assign roles

Making a proposal to the class

- Invite each group to “pitch” their proposal for an action plan to the class. Provide parameters for their pitch (e.g. must include background information about the issue, highlight the importance of the issue, use criteria to frame their justification for their action plan, etc.)
- Ask the class to decide (e.g. by voting or consensus building) on the most effective plan of action.
- Consider having the class carry out the plan of action.

Roles for each group member:

Team Leader (How am I supporting my team members? Is everyone pulling their weight? Do I have any questions for the teacher?)

- delegate
- organise
- accountable to teacher for progress
- leads by example
- motivates group
- supports all members (gopher)
- problem solver
- asks teacher questions and reports to group
- reports on group activity through an Activity Log

Artistic Director (What medium will i use to communicate our proposal?)

- uses media effectively to capture message
- constructs a catchy and provocative message
- makes audience think
- captures audience attention
- focus is on the "medium of the message"

Communication Consultant (Is the content clear, concise, relevant to the audience?)

- writes copy (content of message)
- message is clear and concise
- works closely with Artistic Director
- makes calls to community organizations if necessary

Researcher (What is the focus of our research?)

- finds focused, relevant information
- collects info that answers the following:
- Who, What, Where, When, Why, How
- Why should we care?
- What can we do?
- What are the issues?

Grades 4-6 Language Arts

Subject: Language – Read-alouds of picture books and/or novels

What Makes an Impressive Survivor?

Critical Question

What makes an impressive survivor?

Type of Critical Challenge

Judge the Better or the Best

Overview

In this critical challenge students decode texts making connections between text and self and text and world by searching for the most impressive survivor in a variety of books and/or novels. The critical challenge begins with students considering the criteria for an impressive survivor. They then participate in shared readings and read-alouds of picture books and/or novels. Students will make judgments and draw conclusions about ideas in texts by determining the criteria for what makes an "impressive survivor". They will then use these criteria to help them judge which of the given characters is the most impressive survivor. The flexibility of this challenge allows teachers to adapt the activities to suit a wide variety of texts and/or students.

Objectives

Broad understanding:

- *English Curriculum:* Students will make meaningful connections between themselves, what they encounter in texts, and the world around them.
- *Content Specific:* We all have different qualities which make us more or less able to survive in stressful situations.

Requisite tools

Background knowledge

- knowledge of how differently people can handle stressful survival situations
exposure through readalouds and shared reading to a variety of characters dealing with various survival challenges

Criteria for judgment

- criteria for judging impressiveness of a "survivor" (i.e. physical attributes that help overcome obstacles, reasoning skills that help overcome obstacles, emotional strength that helps overcome obstacles)

Critical thinking vocabulary

concept
criteria

evaluation
evidence
justify
reasoned judgment

Thinking strategies
data charts

Habits of mind
critically minded (willing to evaluate information when it is important to do so)
open minded
attention to detail

Suggested Activities

Connect to students' previous knowledge

- Invite students to independently and quietly think of someone they consider to be a “survivor”. The person might be a fictional character or someone they know or have heard about.
- Ask students to share their thinking with a partner and to explain why they consider that person a survivor. Randomly call on several pairs to share what they discussed.

Share objectives with students

- Explain to students that they will be making a judgment about what makes an impressive survivor by examining a number of fictional characters and comparing their attributes to determine who is the most impressive.

Model the task

- Choose a story (T.V. show, movie, fairy tale, etc.) with which students will be familiar. Alternatively, show a short clip of a movie or read aloud a short story to provide a foundation for discussion.
- Invite students to identify the characteristics needed by a character in the story to solve a problem and survive.

Build criteria for judgment

- Ask students to imagine other situations that would require a person to have specific characteristics to survive. What additional attributes might be needed?
- Invite students to share the attributes they have identified and list them on the

board. As a class, collectively sort attributes into broad categories (e.g. physical attributes, intellectual attributes, emotional attributes, social skills). Finally, turn these categories into statements that indicate criteria for an impressive survivor (e.g. He or she has the necessary physical attributes needed to overcome obstacles.) Alternatively, the process of arriving at criteria could be done through a placemat activity in which students brainstorm characteristics individually in their section of the placemat first. Then, they could use a round-robin to sort characteristics into broad categories (e.g. physical attributes, intellectual attributes, emotional attributes, social skills) and write these in the middle of their placemat. Finally, you might record their ideas on the board and collectively decide which the class will focus on for their challenge.

- Consider encouraging students to rank order which attributes they feel are most important in order to face any obstacle that might come one's way.

Examine candidates for Most Impressive Survivor

- Use read-alouds and /or shared reading to continue the above process. Students will collect information about characters from the stories, and will record evidence of each attribute in a data chart such as the one below:

"Claim to Greatness" Chart (Note: If students have ranked these criteria according to those they deem most essential, that might be reflected in the order in which they appear in the chart.)

Criteria for Survival	Character 1	Character 2	Character 3
Physical Attributes			
Intellectual Attributes			
Emotional Attributes			

- Invite students to use the chart in which they collected data about each character to decide who is the most impressive survivor.
- Based on their preliminary decision, ask students to participate in an Inside/Outside Circles activity in which they have the opportunity to share their decision with a number of partners, hear their partners' decisions and reconsider their ideas before making a final decision

Make a judgment about the most impressive survivor

- Invite students to use the chart in which they collected data about each character and the discussions they had during the Inside/Outside Circles activity to decide who is the most impressive survivor. Ask students to individually fill in the "And the winner is..." planner. [see p. 158, Early Contact and Settlement in New France] to justify and explain their decision.

Communicating their judgment

- Explain to students that they will communicate their judgment in a clear and convincing way. Some options for assessment methods might include:
 - Write a persuasive essay
 - Plan and create a poster advertising your chosen survivor, highlighting his/her most impressive qualities.
 - Give a speech, in role: "You" are the most impressive survivor.
 - Write a letter to convince someone that your chosen survivor is the most impressive

Possible Differentiation

- Reduce number of characters students are asked to consider when choosing "The Most Impressive Survivor".
- Allow students to present the reasons for their choice of most impressive survivor orally

List of Some Suggested Books

FICTION

Chapter Books

Danger at Mason's Island: An Angela and Emmie Adventure, by Tom Schwarzkopf

Hatchet, by Gary Paulsen

Shadow Children: Among the Hidden, by Margaret Peterson Haddix

Maniac Magee, by Jerry Spinelli

Crispin: The Cross of Lead, by Carol Avi

Island of the Blue Dolphins, by Scott O'Dell

Before the Lark by Irene Bennett Brown

I am Lavina Cumming by Susan Lowell

The Breadwinner by Deborah Ellis

The Cay by Theodore Taylor

Julie of the Wolves by Jean Craighead George

Picture Books

Paper Bag Princess, by Robert N. Munsch

Lon Po Po: A Red-Riding Hood Story from China by Ed Young

A Ride on the Red Mare's Back by Ursula K. LeGuin

NON FICTION

Wilma Unlimited: How Wilma Rudolph Became the World's Fastest Woman, by

Kathleen Krull

Lost Star: The Story of Amelia Earhart by Patricia Lauber

Shipwreck At The Bottom Of The World: The Extraordinary True Story of Shackleton and the Endurance, by Jennifer Armstrong

Grade 5 Social Studies

Democracy

Critical Challenge:

Which is the more effective form of government - democracy or a benevolent dictatorship?

Overview:

In this challenge, students consider the merits of different forms of government by deciding on the best type of government for their new (or newly restructured) student council. They start by building criteria for an effective government. Then, they examine two forms of government (democracy and benevolent dictatorship) and consider the opportunities and challenges presented by each in order to make a judgment. Finally, the communicate their judgment in the form of an opinion paragraph to be presented to the school's administration and parent council.

Type of Challenge:

Judge better or best

Curriculum Expectations Addressed:

- use a variety of resources and tools to gather and analyse information about government processes, the rights of groups and individuals, and the responsibilities of citizenship in Canada, including participation in the electoral process;
- identify concrete examples of how government plays a role in contemporary society and of how the rights of groups and individuals and the responsibilities of citizenship apply to their own lives.
- formulate questions to develop a research focus
- use graphic organizers and graphs to sort, classify, and connect information
- use appropriate vocabulary

Requisite tools

Criteria:

Criteria for “an effective form of government”:

- best ensures a reasonable quality of life for everyone
- protect social justice
- efficient decision making

Background Knowledge

- understanding of the characteristics and challenges of democratic decision making
- understanding of the characteristics and challenges of benevolent dictatorship

Critical thinking vocabulary

- Criteria
- Judgment
- Justify

Habits of mind

- **Respectful:** Is willing to engage respectfully in discussion with others.
- **Circumspect:** Is tentative in one's belief until there is sufficient evidence to warrant a more definitive position.
- **Fair-minded:** Will judge ideas on their merits and not simply enforce personal interests and bias.

Suggested Activities

Providing Context

- Invite students to consider the following scenario: The school is creating (or restructuring) its student council. The decisions made by student council will affect all grades and all grades will be represented at student council meetings. The administration and parents' council is considering how decisions should be made. Two different decision-making models have been proposed:
 1. Representatives from each grade vote on every decision; voting determines final decision.
 2. The teacher advisor for student council makes final decisions based on what he/she thinks is best for students and the school.
- Explain to students that their challenge is to make a judgment about what the best decision-making model is for our new student council and defend their argument in the form of an article to the school newsletter.

Identifying initial ideas and connecting to students' previous knowledge

- On the board, draw a continuum which on one reads: "Students should have the final say on all decisions that have to do with them". On the other end of the continuum, write "Teachers should have the final say on all decisions." Ask student to first think to themselves about where they would place themselves on the continuum. Consider asking small numbers of students at a time to approach the board and print their name on the continuum at the spot that best reflects their opinion. You might ask them to then turn to a partner and explain where they stand and the reasons for it. Consider randomly calling on pairs of students to share the reasons they discussed.
- Record students' reasons on board and categorize them to build criteria for an

effective student government body.

- Draw a parallel between criteria that has been built for a student governing body and a country's government. You might guide students toward the following criteria for an effective government:
 1. best ensures a reasonable quality of life for everyone
 2. protect social justice
 3. efficient decision making

Gathering Information

- Invite students to learn more about the two options before they make a final decision. Provide background reading or parallel fictional stories or movie clips which illustrate both a democratic decision making model and that of a benevolent dictatorship. Consider providing students with a graphic organizer (e.g. a T-chart or Venn diagram) on which to record information that they gather about both types of government.
- Ask students to work with a partner to complete an OCI chart (Opportunities, Challenges, Interesting) on each form of government. At the bottom of the chart, ask them to decide whether, given the criteria they developed earlier for an effective model of government, would they give this option a red light, yellow light or green light:
 - red light: we should not even consider this option; the disadvantages outweigh the advantages and we are unlikely to overcome the challenges it presents
 - yellow light: there are a lot of advantages to this form of government but we should only proceed if certain conditions can be met (list the conditions)
 - green light: we should definitely adopt this form of government; the advantages outweigh the challenges

Communicating their decision

- Explain to students that next month's school newsletter will include a variety of opinion pieces on this topic. The school's administration and parent council will be considering all opinions before making a decision on how the new student council will function. Invite students to write an opinion paragraph outlining their opinion on the issue.
- Consider providing examples of opinion paragraphs in order to draw out the criteria for an effective opinion paragraph (e.g. clearly states the argument, provides convincing evidence to support the argument, counters opposing arguments, etc.)

Kindergarten

Cultivating Respect: Goldilocks and the Three Bears

Critical question

What are three powerful ways Goldilocks could have shown respect?

Overview

In this challenge students will consider how someone can show respect by examining the actions of Goldilocks in the story Goldilocks and the Three Bears. Students begin by articulating what kinds of actions would make someone proud of them. Once the teacher has connected these ideas to the concept of respect, students will build criteria for respectful actions. To do this, they will examine several pictures that illustrate both yes and no examples of being respectful. Students will sort the pictures independently in pairs (or will help the teacher sort the pictures as a class) and explain why they sorted the pictures as they did. Students will listen to the story of Goldilocks and the Three Bears. They will discuss whether they think Goldilocks did the “right thing”, whether she behaved appropriately, whether she was respectful. Using a storyboard of the Goldilocks story, students will identify the points in the story where Goldilocks was disrespectful and will redraw (or suggest how to redraw) the frame of the storyboard to suggest a more respectful course of action. The final storyboard will frame a re-telling of the Goldilocks story based on the children’s suggestions for more respectful actions.

Type of Challenge

Rework the Piece

Requisite tools

Background knowledge

- familiarity with the story
- understanding of what it means to show respect

Criteria for judgment

- criteria for respectful actions (e.g. help rather than harm others; protect/don’t hurt people’s feelings; protect/don’t hurt people’s property/things; etc.)

Critical thinking vocabulary

Thinking strategies

- Concept Formation

Habits of mind

- open-mindedness
- persistence
- empathy

Suggested Activities

Connect to students' previous knowledge

- Ask student to think about something that they do that makes their parents or teachers proud of them. Invite students to share their answers with the class. Explain to them that one thing that makes someone proud of you is when you act respectfully.

Build Criteria for Judgment through Concept Formation

- Provide students with a series of illustrations – half of which depict someone being respectful in some way (e.g. helping with chores, raising a hand in class, helping someone who's hurt, sharing, etc.) and half of which depict someone being disrespectful (e.g. kicking or hitting, not sharing, ignoring someone, damaging someone else's things, sticking out their tongue, etc). Consider providing one set of all illustrations to pairs of students and inviting them to sort the pictures into two piles – those that they think show someone being respectful and those which show the opposite. Alternatively, post the illustrations on the board or the wall and invite students to advise you how to sort them into the two piles.
- Once the pictures have been sorted into two categories, ask students to think about what the pictures in each category have in common. Consider summarizing their ideas into two or three criteria for respectful actions. These might include: helping others, not harming others, being careful with other people's things, etc.

Provide Context

- Explain that the class is going to work together to understand what it means to act respectfully by reading a story about someone who *did not* act very respectfully: Goldilocks and the Three Bears. Explain that after the story, students will decide on how Goldilocks should have acted.

Read Aloud

- Read the story of Goldilocks and the Three Bears aloud. Consider inviting students to put up their hand or somehow signal every time Goldilocks does something that they think is disrespectful.

Transform disrespectful actions into respectful actions by redrawing the story

- On a wall or on the board, post a series of illustrations of key moments in the story. These might be illustrations photocopied from a picture book, for example. Number each illustration.

- Model the task that you are about to invite them to do by choosing the first frame of this storyboard. Ask them what Goldilocks is doing which is disrespectful. Ask them to talk to a partner about what Goldilocks could have done differently at this point in the story to show respect. Ask partners to share their ideas with the class. Demonstrate how you would re-draw the illustration to show Goldilocks behaving respectfully.
- Assign each student to one of the frames of this storyboard (or assign them in pairs, perhaps pairing up JK and SK students). Provide them with a blank sheet of paper and invite them to redraw the frame to illustrate Goldilocks behaving respectfully.
- Once they have completed their illustrations, post them above or below the original storyboard frames.

Retell the story

- Using the reworked storyboard, retell the story of Goldilocks and the Three Bears. Alternatively, invite students to take turns retelling their portion of the story while you provide the narrative that weaves the various parts together.